Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-8, 10-49 and 51-62 are pending in the application. Claim 50 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 1, 16, 22, 26, 33, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48 and 57 are amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8, 10-30, 32-35, 37, 38, 42-45 and 47-62 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Tsubaki et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,790,742, or Tsubaki in combination with Kanda, U.S. Patent No. 4,740,055 and/or Minemoto, U.S. Patent No. 5,699,461. Claims 36 and 46 are indicated as being allowable.

Based on the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Allowable claims 36 and 46

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 36 and 46.

Interview at USPTO of August 23, 2005

Applicants' representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the interview at the USPTO of August 23, 2005. During the interview, the Tsubaki reference was discussed. Applicants proposed to amend the independent claims to recite that the cladding layer is thixotropic and contains both hydrophobic and hydrophilic nano-particles. Applicants believe that these amendments overcome the

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rejections based on Tsubaki, or any combination of Tsubaki with the other cited references. Accordingly, all the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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